

National Park Service U.S. Department of the Interior

Death Valley National Park

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Death Valley News Release

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Wildflower Forecast Best in 8 Years For Death Valley National Park

The devastation to park facilities brought on by heavy rains in August and September is slowly being repaired. In addition to the flash floods this summer, the park has also experienced a series of heavy winter rains which have caused a number of temporary road closures. All of this bodes poorly for park visitors. This winter's season statistics indicate the park's visitation is down about 15%. Local businesses in the park and in surrounding communities have felt the brunt of the impacts of these storms.

"Out of all this can only come better things," states Superintendent James T. Reynolds. The new Highway 190 is now under construction and is slated to be completed in early April. These rain events have set the stage for a spectacular flower show in the desert. Carpets of green already cover alluvial fans, washes and roadsides. Park visitors are already being treated to pockets of Desert Gold blooming along Highway 190 west of Furnace Creek. The greatest variety of early wildflowers can be seen in the southern end of the park along the Badwater Road (Highway 178). Already a very nice bloom of desert sand verbena and the brown-eyed evening primrose can be enjoyed along roadsides and alluvial fans. A closer look may reveal the early blossoms of the golden evening primrose, notch-leafed and caltha-leaf phacelias or lesser mojavea.

The park should be in full bloom by mid-February with the peak of the wildflower season along the valley floor occurring sometime in early March. Park Superintendent Reynolds encourages everyone to come explore this beautiful show of color this spring.

For more updated information please check the park's web site at www.nps.gov/deva or call the park's information phone line at 760-786-3200.

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